4c Lorimer 1-3 (1930-4; 1934-5) 1935 AVT Burushe AVT

No. XLI.

Gold-Washing in Hunza.

From ancient times the Diramiting have not (been required) to wash for gold for the Thams, because they are the seed of the original inhabitants of Hunza, and the Thams give them precedence in everything.

When the Thams have to go anywhere it is the custom for the Diramiting to carry the Tham's bag of gold. The remaining three tribes they make carry the gold-washing tray. The three tribes, each taking, along with the Chief Gold-Washer, two assistants of their own tribe, proceed to the edge of the river and carry out the Autumn and Spring gold-washing for the Tham.

There is a tax of a *bat.i* of gold on each Chief Gold-Washer. Twelve rupees are (a *bat.i*). Every autumn and spring they either wash for gold or work for hire and bring in the tax.

Those (only) are gold-washers whose fathers and grandfathers have from of old been carriers of loads. They do not make people who have done superior service, wash for gold.

This gold-washing tax is in force from Maiyûn up to Ata-abâd. In Hèrber from Galmit to Miagâr and the Chaprîman there is no custom of gold-washing in force. They do not make the people (there) do it.

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but the sense is clear and is re-inforced by a note: "gold-washing is only imposed on coolies, low-class people and retiers".

In Gilgit and Chilas gold-washing is carried on by a separate community, the *Sarakuré*, who are looked down on but are fairly prosperous. They are probably of foreign origin.

10 *pwy ọṣi* — is equivalent to "ancestors".

11 *aipeṣiew* — the Causative of **-alam*, as also *aipeṣiew* in line 18.

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wards the maintenance of the Berichos and they travel about the villages mending and repairing items requiring attention, and, of course, providing music and entertainment wherever it is required. I guess they could be compared to the traveling tinkers of Ireland.

The Bericho blacksmith shop contained all the accoutrements found in the blacksmith shops of America. There was a pit in which charcoal was laid and kept alive and glowing by a pair of goatskin bellows . . . the customer usually wielded the bellows while his implement was being manufactured or repaired. There were many necessary tools—hammers of various sizes and tongs and, of course, a large chunk of some old machine that served as an anvil.

Then there was the goldsmith. He didn't fashion much out of gold any more because there wasn't much gold. Some time ago there was a quantity of gold washed from the Chalt and Hunza Rivers. This was done at times when the rivers had receded to a low ebb and then the sand left on what was the river bottom a few weeks or months previous was washed for signs of gold. The people who collected or panned or mined this gold were called "marooh."

This Hunzan goldsmith also made silver trinkets, rings, bracelets, medallions, pendants, ear rings, broaches and other articles of the craft. What's more, they were set with attractive colored stones, for the mountains around Hunza abound with many beautiful and valuable stones. As the women of Hunza do love and wear jewelry, the goldsmith was kept quite busy.

Yes, there was a wood turner in the area, too. Whether or not his craft has improved since the advent of John Clark, the American engineer who set up a wood carving school with his headquarters in the old Baltit Fort, I am unable to say. But from the work

792 his ancestors' dynasty in India, he donated what is now
871 the Hunzan school system. The fact that the children of Hunza are given a good education, without any cost to them, is due entirely to the kindness and benevolence of that great man. He started and maintained the system and I trust that his son will continue in his father's footsteps."

That the school system of Hunza is working, I can attest.

792 From what I have been able to gather and learn, Hunza was one of the states of India that contributed to the coffers of the Aga Khan. There is some story, true or mythical, that each year all of his religious followers throughout the world gave him a gift of gold or platinum to the extent of his weight. Now I do know
[316] that some gold was mined in Hunza and probably that, too, was sent to the Aga Khan or added to the sum or weight sent from all of the countries and the millions of his followers to be his gift but, as far as I know, at the present time there is not much gold being mined in Hunza and nowhere did I see any sign of anything that could be used as a means of export to bring money into Hunza.

124 In the meantime I was enjoying my breakfast and between munching mouthfuls of food, I was asking the Mir some rather important questions.

651 "I read somewhere some time ago, that the revenues
681 you obtain from the fines you levy upon people in Hunza who commit misdemeanors or break rules or laws are added to the coffers of your own estate."

The Mir thought this was a great joke and laughed heartily.

"To begin with," he said, "laws are seldom broken by my people. They are good people and they live peaceably and do not commit serious offenses. During